My dear Emma I don't know why but my Photo has never been done, perhaps I have an artistic objection to it, but some day I'll put on my uniform hat & sword & have it done – but my portrait in oil is to go to the Florence gal

BRITISH CONSULATE, ROME

Rome 26th December 1868

My dear Tom

Yours of the 19th came this morn. & gave great delight as I was afraid you were imitating me in a serious illness but your having done so much work is a gratifying reason for your silence

I'm so glad that I sent the Consular letter at once to Cairo as Anderson will have got it on his arrival & so with the Consuls aid will be enabled to procure all well for dear Emma & the chicks

I ought to tell you that if you send your letters to the Foreign Office directed to me, you'll save the postage – "H.B.M. Consul Rome) Foreign office London"

My twins arrive tomorrow morn. – arthur brings several unfinished works, & I shall be in great glee for I have been alone near 2 years, I say alone but yet I get 10 & 20 visits a day my eyes are lonely as I cannot go out & I am too poor or too saving to have company

I think I told you that I am sacrificing every

1869

2

JA 5 JA 6 69

Thomas H. Severn Esqre

24 Lyme St. N.W

London

penny
to raise an annuity of at least £100 a year for dear
Eleanor & I am glad to say that I am really succeeding
having already scraped together £750 as yet & have
to pay £250 more to make it a £1000 & then
my 50 shares are safe – This spec of the water
company (acqua Marcia) is going on really well &
will be complete this year – by the conducting a
very fine water to Rome from a lake in mountains
32 miles off but at such a high level that it will
supply the top stories of Rome – This project has not
a little impoverished me, but I calculate by in my
illness as I have had logs in carriages, but
now the English ladies take me out sometimes
I am really getting well & yesterday a dear old
fd Miss Fairholme assured me that she had never
seen me looking so well, that I have a bright clear
complexion, but yet with weakness when I get up
from the chair, – I can now walk 2 miles
29th My twins came all safe on the 27th having
travelled from Paris without stopping – This a pleasure
to me & more so as they are very well & strong
The old picture I took to retouching which Dr says
convalescent turns out to be of great value so the
great judges say, indeed by Correggio – It seems that
I have great skill in these matters & so as the old
picture cost a song when in this dirt I shall go on
& pick up all I can as I may form a valuable collection
Your loving brother
Joe